



Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development

OKLAHOMA WORKFORCE YOUTH COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Date: August 21, 2015

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City, 900 N. Portland Ave., Oklahoma City, OK

Call to Order/Welcome and Introductions

Co-chair Chuck Mills welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending. He asked everyone to self-introduce themselves.

Chuck said that we want to create opportunities for our youth to help them be successful and have positive futures. We want them to be good role models and citizens for the future of our country. He said that nothing official can happen until after November 1st with the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as that is when the state board takes effect. There is a lot of focus on out-of-school youth 16-24 years old with the new Act and he is excited about that. Chuck would like for the Youth Council to focus on the early childhood education piece, creating Career Pathways awareness, letting kids explore their interests and make learning fun for them. We need to help youth build a better foundation and help the PK-12 kids before they possibly end up as an out-of-school youth without a high school diploma or post-secondary education or credential. Chuck is going to meet with Don Raleigh, Superintendent of Pryor Schools, because he is already engaging business with the local schools. Sometimes that is hard to get through the door because there are tests that have to be done that are mandated, and that restricts time. Some superintendents don't see the value of trying to engage business and the resources they can bring into the school system.

The second thing is having students have access into the awareness piece of what's out there in their community. Jeff Downs suggested that we come up with a plan like CA2(squared). It means Career Access and Awareness. As he understands what we are trying to do, there are two avenues we can follow – career access and awareness. We can branch off to have different committees that can work on the community side of the house. To get to the access and awareness side, we can do the same thing with schools and education – all three branches – and then the industry community. There are three different legs or spokes coming off of the center hub and we can wrap strategies around those three areas. So for access and awareness – as an example on the awareness side – how do we get the message out to the parents? They don't know where or how to steer their kids. They don't know what programs or what's the best for them and very few of them really understand about how to research this because most sites are too complicated and they stop after the first five minutes of looking. So, it's really helping parents to find those pathways to help their kids. If I am a student in manufacturing, do I know those manufacturers or what manufacturing they do? For the teachers, they need that professional development that we talked about here at our meetings. Ben Robinson did that this last summer for teachers – the Oklahoma Education and Industry Partnership. For the training sessions, he mixed agriculture with energy and had about 85-100

teachers come in from all around the state. They did professional development-type classes in the mornings and in the afternoon they all got on busses and went to Tinker AFB, to Tulsa, and to Ardmore to the Nobel Foundation and exposed them to all of the different careers and different information that they could take back and talk to their students about it and also to the parents. So we already have something happening on the access and awareness side of it.

A comment was made that we need to make parents aware of services available to them as well as to their children. Jeff said that at the end of the day, the parents and kids need to feel empowered to drive this.

Someone asked about the replacement program for OKCIS. It is OKCareerGuide.org and it is being rolled out at this time. Roberta Douglas and Kelly Arrington of Career Tech are working on that program.

Cecelia Robinson Woods talked about students, particularly minorities, who qualify for gifted classes and are not taking them. Counselors need to call these students and get them enrolled into gifted or advance classes and also get the parents involved with making these decisions.

Jeff Downs said what is missing is relevant experience. We need to have strategies wrapped around relevant experience.

Chuck talked about the plan for Oklahoma Works. He said the state is divided into nine regions and they are called Key Economic Networks or KENs. The premise for this is there are KEN chairs for each region. Chuck is the chair for his region. They are to identify the education and business partners and pull these people together. They are to assess the interest and then facilitate between education and business as to whether there are internships or job shadowing, etc. The first KEN meeting is to start next week in Oklahoma City and will go through October in order to have one in each region. The governor will be at each meeting and it is open to the public. Each region will have its own personality and interests. It is tailored for each region to create their own personal program and opportunities under the umbrella of the state and regional programs.

A program was mentioned that worked on character, soft skills and life skills. A pre-ACT or Career Exploration assessment is done at some schools to help students know what their interests are and what skills and strengths they have.

New Business

None.

Old Business

None.

Next Meeting

The next Youth Council meeting will be announced at a later date.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30 a.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Linda Emrich*